Computer Mediated Communication Special Interest Group (CMC SIG)
EUROCALL Annual Conference and CMC SIG Meeting
2011-08-31
17:30 - 18:15 Computer-Mediated Communication SIG B40 Dearing

Meeting Minutes
Taken by Francesca Helm, CMC SIG secretary and new member of the Eurocall Executive Committee
Revised by Sarah Guth, CMC SIG chair

Introductions and News
Current chair of the CMC SIG, Sarah Guth, provided a description of the SIG's purpose and activities:

- sharing information with other members on recent developments in CMC related applications, research and pedagogy through the SIG website
- organising pre-conference workshops at EUROCALL conferences. Organising regional workshops in members' home institutions which will enable members to make others aware of EUROCALL's work:
  - *17-19 April 2008, University of Padova, Italy* CMC SIG Workshop: "Computer Mediated Communication and Learning: Research and Practice"
  - *23-25 April 2009, University of León, Spain* CMC SIG workshop: "Researching Computer Mediated Communication in Foreign Language Education: Issues and Methods"
  - *14-15 April 2011, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain* EUROCALL CMC & Teacher Education SIGs Annual Workshop 2011: "Getting the Bigger Picture: Language Teacher Competences in CMC Settings"
- collaborating together on the development of international project proposals, e.g. the proposal for European Project INTENT (Integrating Telecollaborative Networks into University Foreign Language Education) which has recently received funding was developed by several members of the CMC SIG who, indeed, had come to know one another through the SIG. (Francesca 'warned' members present that as part of this project CMC SIG members may be receiving a questionnaire shortly which she hopes they participate in!)
- establishing links with other organisations' special interest groups working in related areas such as the CMC SIG of the American association Calico.

Sarah Guth gave news of the next CMC and Teacher Education SIG joint workshop to be held in Bologna, Italy in the Spring of 2012 with vocal confirmation given by the host at the University of Bologna, Ana Beaven, who was present at the meeting.

(Update: Shortly Ana Beaven will be sending out a Call for Papers for the workshop. We hope to have lots of interesting proposals! One plenary speaker has already been confirmed.)

Participant Introductions
All participants were asked to introduce themselves and give a brief description of their interests in order to open up opportunities for networking among people with similar interests. For example, some areas of common interest were:
- Telecollaboration
- CMC in primary education
- Blogs and wikis, Web 2.0 tools in general for CMC
- Search for new ideas for teacher trainers
- Intercultural aspects of CMC and transnational exchanges
- Open educational resources
- Merging informal and formal learning
- Virtual worlds

- Multimodal communicative competence
- Online testing
- Participant behaviour in online environments such as blogs and social networks

This brief list clearly points out the many areas of overlap between the CMC SIG and the Teacher Education SIG, hence the decision to have joint workshops in 2011 and now again in 2012.

Anthony Stenton mentioned that he is responsible for the New Technology Focus Group of CercleS, the European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education (http://www.cercles.org/en/main.html).

Mirjam Hauck, chair of the Teacher Education SIG and member of the executive board of Eurocall's North American sister organisation, CALICO (Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium), pointed out the need to strengthen the link between the CMC SIG and the corresponding SIGs of CALICO or, for example, the group mentioned by Anthony Stenton.

Discussion of online space for the CMC SIG
Sarah explained that the group is not active online. The CMC SIG first used Yahoo Groups as an online meeting space; following its failure to get participants more active online, it was moved to Ning where it has been for two years now with similar results, i.e. no online activity. Furthermore, Ning is no longer free and the SIG has been paying monthly fees and it doesn't seem to make sense to be paying for a space nobody is using. She explained that clearly the main reason is the busy schedules all members have and asked for suggestions on alternative means for online communication throughout the year. Some suggestions were:
- Facebook for communication and Drop Box for sharing documents (some members expressed reservations as not all people from all cultures feel comfortable using a social network such as Facebook and they would have to become members of Facebook to join the online space)
- List serv for communication and a wiki for 'presenting' the CMC SIG online and as a repository of documents
- Organizing synchronous online discussions once in a while that may be limited in number but specific to members' research
- These online discussions could be organised around 5-minute slots – explain something in 5 minutes - what you do, how you do it and who you do it with

The majority of participants agreed that using a listserv and wiki would be the best option.
(Update: As of Monday, September 19, the CMC SIG listserv is up and running! Thanks to the help of Eurocall secretary Toni Patton, the new online space can be found on the same site where the Eurocall Members listserv is located. The url is: http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/CMCSIG I have added all those who attended the meeting in Nottingham as subscribers. You will not receive notification, but you should already be members if you link to the site. I am currently working on the wiki and will let members know when it is ready.)

Future Activities
The Executive Committee of Eurocall would like all SIGs to hold a pre-conference workshop and a symposium at the next Eurocall conferences. The format mentioned above (5-minute slots) was suggested for a symposium at next year's conference.

Sarah asked for more active participation from members in suggesting and organising workshops and symposiums. Since the SIG was founded in 2006, most of the activities have been organised by a core group of members and Sarah encouraged other members to propose ideas for next year's conference in Sweden and/or to be willing to manage or run a symposium such as the one suggested above. The listserv could be a place where members could discuss their ideas and participation in these activities.

List of attendees
We were so pleased to see such a numerous group, with old and new faces and coming from across Europe and around the globe. We feel this is a good sign for the future of the SIG so thanks for coming!

Attia	Mariam
Barbosa	Vania
Barnes	Françoise
Beaven	Ana
Beaven	Tita
Bradley	Linda
Cappellini	Marco
Comas-Quinn	Anna
Dooly	Melinda
Georgiadou	Olga
Gia Anh Le	Ho
Gomes	Francisco Wellington
Gruson	Brigitte
Guichon	Nicolas
Guth	Sarah
Helm	Francesca
Hulkko	Timo
Hvidtfeldt	Susanne
Idrianti	Idrianti
Kim	Heesun
Kleban	Marcin
Neuhoff	Antje
Nikiforou	Eleni
Nocchi	Susanna
Örnberg Berglund	Therese
Papadima-Sophocleous	Salomi
Pulker	Hélène
Rossade	Klaus-Dieter
Sarré	Cédric
Sato	Takeshi
Song	Lin Lin
Stencel	Przemyslaw
Stenton	Tony
Vurdien	Ruby